

## *expands cleanup effort with approved funding*

*Rogers Fibre Mill Site: Bar Mills, Maine*

*S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

*February 1999*

### **Overview**

This newsletter provides a summary update about the status of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) cleanup efforts at the Rogers Fibre Mill Site located in a residential neighborhood on Depot Street in Bar Mills, Maine.

During summer 1998, EPA demolished the 100-year-old, 1 to 3 story dilapidated building on the site, which was used by the Rogers Fibre Co. to manufacture fiberboard materials from 1917 to 1980. This company merged with Colonial Board Company (CBC) in 1967 and was known from that point on as CBC's Rogers Fibre Division.

During an investigation of the site in September 1997, EPA discovered materials with concentrations of asbestos as high as 95%, and drums and other containers containing elevated levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These findings prompted EPA to initiate a cleanup due to the significant human health and environmental risks posed by the site; especially threats posed to the local drinking water supplies and sensitive Saco River ecosystem.

### **What work has EPA completed thus far?**

EPA began cleanup work at the site in summer 1998. Since that time, EPA has coordinated work

with the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the town of Buxton, the Saco River Corridor Commission, and other surrounding municipalities that rely on the Saco River for drinking water and recreational use. This teamwork approach has enabled EPA to make significant progress at the site.

To date, EPA has:

- ✓ sampled soils and sediments to evaluate the nature and extent of contamination onsite, and defined possible pathways for off-site migration of contaminants.
- ✓ demolished all four buildings that made up the complex, leaving only the foundation of the main mill
- ✓ inspected the concrete mill foundation and determined that a portion of the foundation could be cut without harming the dam stability.
- ✓ removed approximately 45 cubic yards of asbestos-containing roofing debris and transported this material to Turnkey Landfill in New Hampshire for disposal.
- ✓ removed approximately 4,890 lbs of friable asbestos previously found in the basement during EPA's initial site investigation and transported this material to the

Turnkey Landfill for disposal

- ✓ shoveled eighteen 55-gallon drums of oily debris from the turbine room.
- ✓ removed seven 55-gallon drums containing oily debris contaminated with heavy metals that were from the support column and around the outside of the digesters
- ✓ relocated a family residing next door prior to work start-up due to the unsafe distance between the house and the site
- ✓ demolished the smokestack and water tower
- ✓ inspected and cleaned concrete tanks and other containers onsite. EPA sampled all tanks and waste containers to determine the types of waste present in preparation for transporting and disposing the wastes at EPA approved facilities offsite
- ✓ decontaminated concrete surfaces of the mill dam or foundation that were contaminated with PAHs and/or heavy metals
- ✓ established fencing or hand rails and guard rails to prevent accidental falls into the river or mill foundation, and vehicles from driving into the river/dam.



- ✓ coordinated with DEP, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Saco River Corridor Commission, and other agencies to develop a cleanup approach for contamination in soils and sediments that eliminates any threats of direct public contact to contaminated soil/sediment and reduces the ecological and environmental risks.

### ***EPA expands cleanup work due to additional findings***

Since August 1998, EPA approved an additional \$2 million to address remaining contaminated soils, surfaces, and materials on site. This funding was needed in order to address unknown quantities of additional contaminated substances and materials confirmed by EPA investigations onsite.

In addition to the asbestos found inside the building, EPA confirmed that roofing debris found on the island adjacent to the mill and within the collapsed interior of the building contained up to 80% asbestos. Some of this asbestos containing material (ACM) is partially buried in sediments on the island. EPA cannot estimate the quantity of ACM on the island until phase II of the demolition work is complete.

EPA has also identified the following contaminated materials, soils, and debris onsite. (The total volumes of these materials will be determined as cleanup work progresses):

- ✓ One of three surface soil samples taken from a stained area on the island contained high levels of total polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs).
- ✓ Chunks of metal slag on the island contain high levels of heavy metals such as lead, copper, and zinc.
- ✓ Debris in the basement of the mill building contains chromium.
- ✓ Materials containing dry red dye and soil/sediment stained with a dye substance are located in areas of the collapsed main mill building and on the island. EPA conducted further testing of these dye-stained materials to evaluate possible contamination.
- ✓ demolish contaminated concrete surfaces including floors, walls and tanks and dispose of these materials at an EPA approved off-site disposal facility
- ✓ conduct post-removal surface water and sediment sampling in off-site areas in the Saco River
- ✓ continue to remove contaminated sediments and debris from underneath of the building foundation and on the island
- ✓ stabilize and restore the site to acceptable conditions, including erosion controls to minimize damage to Depot Street

EPA's additional funding to address contamination on the island and in the collapsed mill building will enable EPA to bring adequate heavy equipment to the site. Using this equipment, EPA will further define the nature and extent of contamination and perform cleanup work on-site; especially on the island.

### ***What cleanup work does EPA plan to accomplish this coming construction season?***

Currently, EPA is working on-site with an expected cleanup completion date in June 1999. EPA's work plan, both ongoing and planned, includes the following activities:

***Please contact us when you have questions or concerns***

#### **U.S. EPA**

**Janis Tsang, On-Scene Coordinator**

**On-Site: (207) 929-6167**

**(617) 918-1231**

***tsang.janis@epa.gov***

**Erin Heskett, Public Affairs**

**(617) 918-1054**

***heskett.erin@epa.gov***

**EPA's toll free number is:**

**1-888-372-7341**

**Just ask the receptionist for either Janis or Erin.**

#### **Town of Buxton**

**Fred Farnham**

**(207) 929-3046**